

Government, the Shipping Control
 Committee sent
Complaint of a communication to me in
 reply to
Shipping my request for information on
 merchant
Control shipping, shipowners' profits,
 and cutting
Committee down of imports. In this
 letter they
 said :—

cc From the very beginning of their
 work in
 January last this Committee have
 urged the
 necessity of restricting imports in
 order to make
 the supply of tonnage meet the
 demands made
 upon it. The Committee's
 recommendations were
 set out in a Memorandum to the Board
 of Trade,
 dated 10th February. . . . At that time
 it had
 been proposed that the importation of
 particular
 articles which are not essential should
 be pro-
 hibited or restricted. The Committee
 suggested
 that in lieu of a list of articles that may
not be
 imported there should be prepared a list
 of necessary
 articles that *may* be imported, and that
 it should be
 decided for a period to be fixed that
 nothing but
 those articles should be allowed to be
 imported.
This recommendation was carried out,
 but in so
 small a degree that the effect on
 tonnage was
 negligible. What seemed to the
 Committee urgent
 then applies to-day in a still greater
 degree."

Ten months' discussion, examination and
 recom-
 mendation by an able and influential
 Committee

had produced " negligible " results, when
we were
face to face with defeat through lack of
sea transport
for essentials. Committees are helpful to
guide men
of action on the right course. But for
weak or
remiss administrators they only afford an
excuse for
postponing movement on embarrassing
questions.